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CONCERNING PICTURE JURIES.

When a man is on jury duty in the courts he feels that it is up to him to give his time and brains to the matter in hand, that justice may be done the prisoner on trial.

The better citizen he is the more conscientious he is, and the less likely is the trial to bring about a miscarriage of justice.

It often happens that artists are called upon to serve on juries to judge of the merits or demerits of the pictures of their fellows.

A man does not have to serve on that kind of jury. He can plead disinclination and escape the service (and the honor), but if he consents to serve he should be proud to give his time and his brains (the service really does need brains), to a cause that may be for the betterment of art and the encouragement of artists.

He must see to it that no unworthy picture gets his vote. He should demand that he have time to look at each picture that comes before him so that he may judge it strictly on its merits (setting aside prejudice as much as may be), so that the chances may be lessened that a struggling artist who has painted his best and painted worthily shall not be turned down because a juror was in a hurry to get home, or because the artist did not use the methods most approved by the jurymen.

I know of a young artist in America who has painted some pictures that will cry out for recognition in the years to come, and they will be bought at prices that would set him on his feet to-day.

He has never been able to pass a single jury in New York or in Philadelphia!

His failure to pass is certainly one on the juries that rejected him, for his merits are patent to any artist who knows a good picture when he sees one.

In the years to come, when his pictures are famous, many artists who turned him down to-day will say, "Wonderful work. Delicate perception. Subtle appreciation of the half secrets of nature and a strikingly individual interpretation of them."

Rats! My dear artist-juror, if you had taken the time to look at his pictures when they came up to you at trial after trial, you might have hastened the time of his appreciation, and his soul would not have been loaded so heavily with the chains of despair.

Every artist should make "noblesse oblige" his motto.

Lend a hand to the fellow who is struggling upward, even as you struggle upward. You cursed inefficient, prejudiced, careless and hurried jurors. See to it that you are not inefficient, prejudiced, careless and hurried when it comes your turn to judge.

And if it be the fault of the jury system, "reform it altogether."

There is a human being in some attic waiting breathlessly the verdict on the picture over which he toiled, and which is now awaiting your decision. Give it a fair chance. It is probably bad, but perhaps it is only different.

And the thing that is different to-day is often gospel to-morrow.

CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS.

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL.

This is a term expressing desire—alas, not realization. New York is beautiful in spots, but not "the city beautiful."

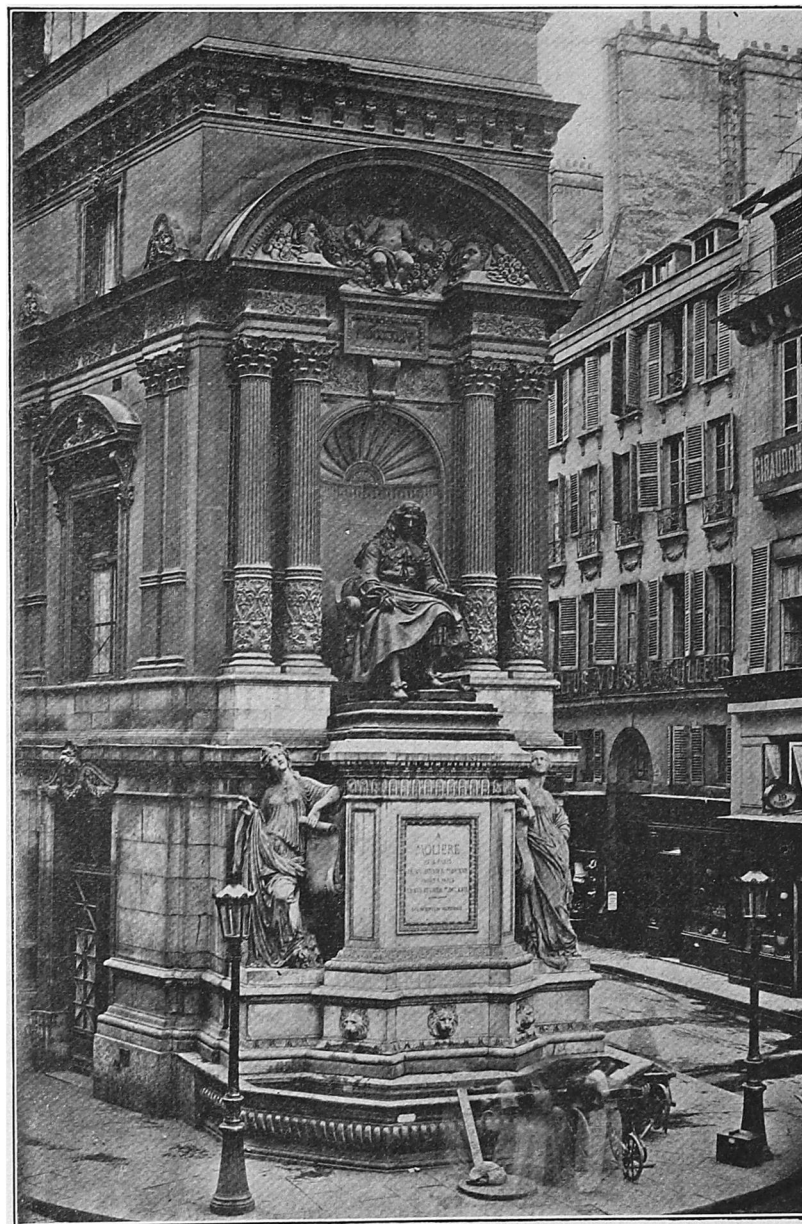
Much is being done here and there to give artistic taste its dole, by buildings of artistic design, ornamented by sculpture, and outwardly showing that the hive of trade need not be housed in ugly shape. We need only to wander from place

to place, from the Clearing House to the Chamber of Commerce, to the new Stock Exchange, to the Appellate Division Courthouse, on Madison Square, to see the improvement of architectural design, when it calls in Sculpture to aid it in beautifying exteriors.

And it is my plea that municipal action could be taken to increase such beauty spots. We hear much about the improvements to be made by depressing streets, open park spaces, monumental buildings, and yet, Why is Sculpture neglected in carrying out such schemes? Look at the Washington Arch—niches there for statues, the top ready for a group. But the arch was built years ago, and as far as a work of art, it is only half finished. So it is with Grant's Tomb. Again at the Criminal Courts Building, where statuary must have entered into the original scheme, but failed of execution.

Now compare this with the "out of doors" Sculpture of Paris and Florence as shown in two of the illustrations in this number, and tell me whether the Municipal Art Society might not strain its efforts to complete what is half finished before it undertakes new and gigantic schemes.

The trouble lies with our ever changing official bodies.



FONTAINE MOLIERE—PARIS

They all want to get the credit for having done something; but they are not long enough in power to complete their designs—and the succeeding official body does not care to finish the work, but rather bends its efforts to do something for which it shall receive the credit alone. And so we see numbers of artistic abortions, half-completed attempts to make the city beautiful, but leaving it half-baked.

THE FINANCE OF COLLECTING.

The charm of collecting objects of art or literary gems is many sided. Not the least interesting part of it in this materialistic age is the increase in values of books, paintings or gems. The discerning ones have often picked up for a song something that became an asset.

An example of this we saw in the late Waggaman sale, where the pictures which had been judiciously selected proved almost without exception a decidedly good investment. The phenomenal advance of \$1,500 to \$40,200 of the great Mauve was not the only incident. Another Mauve: "Hunter and Dog—Early Morning," brought \$5,300—it cost originally \$900. Mr. Waggaman paid also \$900 for one of the Daubigny's which at the sale brought \$4,200.

In looking over some recent Sotheby and Christie catalogues and other records, I culled some further data. In 1903 there was sold at Christie's a portrait of a lady by Nattier for \$15,500 which sixty years ago brought \$21. Last December the property of Mr. John Tomlinson was sold. He had been a Cousin Pons in habits and during his long life had acquired a veritable museum of artistic things. Among other lots he had purchased years ago for less than \$10 a roll of three unmounted canvases. One of these "rags" proved to be an indubitable Romney and represented a comely little girl of about six holding her doll, accompanied by a little boy of four. The painting brought \$32,500.

At the Flower sale last month some other figures may be noted. An early Flemish picture, portrait of Mary Tudor, Queen of Louis XII., which in 1892 had brought \$2,000, brought \$6,000. This painting had no name of artist attached, it was merely a school picture—but the English collector does not buy names like most of his American confrères, but takes a good picture, name or not. Another school picture, early Flemish, which in 1892 had gone for \$275, brought \$1,550. The most remarkable advance, however, was shown by a painting of the rare Quentyn Massys, which was shown me a few years ago by the noted expert, Charles Dowdeswell. This small panel had, in 1885, been bought by a connoisseur for \$185, and at the Flower sale brought \$6,000.

To turn to books we find a Burns Bible selling at Sotheby's not so long ago for \$8,300. In 1897 the original autograph of Scott's "Lady of the Lake" made \$6,450 against \$1,320 in 1867. Half a century ago a copy of the famous Kilmarnock edition of the poems by Burns, 1786, published at 3 shillings, was bought for 1 shilling; in 1903 a copy was sold for \$5,000.

To come nearer home, I saw a few days ago an old copperplate of a portrait of Washington, which the owner had picked up recently in a junkshop for 25 cents, for which he was offered three days later \$375 by a well-known dealer.

Verily, if I head this article "The Finance of Collecting," would I not be justified to call it rather "The Romance of Collecting?"

One of the most significant and important steps was taken by Mr. Charles L. Freer of Detroit, Michigan, who has offered to the Smithsonian Institution of Washington his art collection, together with the means to build an individual museum to house these treasures. Mr. Freer's collection comprises examples from many of the best American painters, Tryon, Dewing, Thayer, Walker and others; it contains the finest

collection of Whistler's paintings and etchings in the world and includes the famous peacock decorations from the Leyland home of England; it further has a costly and valuable array of Oriental potteries, lacquer metal work and wood carvings.

This donation may be regarded as a princely gift, which surely will be a fitting memorial to one of our most discriminating art collectors when the nation shall enter into possession—which I hope may be at a far distant time.



A. T. VAN LAER.

WESTCHESTER VALLEY. ONE OF THE BEST LANDSCAPES IN THE RECENT ACADEMY EXHIBITION.

The curious way in which attributions are given to old paintings, picked up in junkshops by the professional "pearl in the gutter" hunter, was shown by the method pursued by a certain collector in town whose house is full of flimflam pictures in flaunty frames. He used to have an old friend who was a well-known expert but unfortunately given to the cup that cheers. Whenever our collector had found one of his priceless fakes he would send for his friend and when he desired a certain name given to his picture he would give a certain brand of "licker"; when the attribution would not be high-sounding enough he would change the drinks and a richer name would be forthcoming, and so on until the art-collector was satisfied with the importance of his acquisition.

To suit the requirements he had tablets made of uniform size on which the names of his principal Old Masters were painted. The little nailholes in the frame would fit any tablet, so that, when a painting had been tacked Vander Helst and a particularly strong absinthe would change it to a Van Dyck, the tablet could be changed and no harm done the frame—an important item when the most costly part of the art object is to be considered. Thus a Brouwer would become a Teniers and what at first was called a Fra Bartolomeo would finally become a Titian—but the latter transformation generally required a liberal supply of champagne.

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I was taken in hand a few days ago by a delightfully ingenu young art student, who lectured me on the cuts of the old crayon-holder and long-haired brush which flank the picture on the front page. "Ah, but they are no longer used."